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762 pound word (*ō·yun-tē·mar-tô·liganga-*) in order to express the nature of the act.

673 2. That they are not entirely devoid of moral consciousness may, I think, in some measure, be demonstrated by the fact of their possessing a word, *yū·bda-*, signifying sin or wrong doing, which is used in connection with falsehood, theft, grave assault, murder, adultery, and — burning wax (!),[1] which deeds are believed to anger *Pū·luga-*, the Creator, of whom more will be said hereafter.[2]

627 837 3. Cases of adultery in their own villages are said to be of rare occurrence. If detected, the injured husband would probably inflict condign punishment on the guilty parties, but at the risk of retaliation on the part of the male offender and his friends; there appears, however, to be an understanding, that the greater the provocation offered the less is the risk incurred of the injured person or his friends avenging the wrong, but no appeal to the chief for redress is ever made.

628 674 4. If an offence, such as an assault or theft, be committed by one or more members of another tribe during a visit or by stealth, it is regarded as premeditated, and generally resented as a tribal affair, resulting in a feud and more or less bloodshed.

273 177 5. Intercourse with Europeans and other foreigners has, it must be confessed, unhappily opened their eyes to the existence of some vices of which they had formerly no knowledge;[3] notably is this the case with regard to drunkenness, for, being, till the time they made our acquaintance, "blessed in the ignorance of spirituous liquors," they had no conception of its effects, and, to express an inebriate, have invented a word (*lē·lēkanga-*) signifying "staggerer." It must, however, be added, that in consequence of the extreme partiality for rum and other intoxicating drinks which they manifest, much care has to be taken to prevent them from gratifying the easily acquired taste.

276 177 **Narcotics.**—1. Prior to our advent they were also entirely ignorant of narcotics in any form; but one of the evil results of their intercourse with us has been the introduction of the practice of smoking, and so rapidly have they (both men and women) acquired the habit, that, when at a distance from the homes and unable to obtain tobacco, they have been seen to fill their short clay pipes, which, it is scarcely necessary to say, have been obtained from us, with *pán* leaves rather than endure entire deprivation.

[1] *Vide* "Journ. Anthrop. Inst.," vol. xi, p. 288, and *post*, "Superstitions," paragraph 13.

[2] *Vide post* "Religious Beliefs," paragraph 8.

[674] [3] The crimes of abduction, rape, seduction, unnatural offences, &c., appear never to have been committed among them.

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2. I have used the word "evil" advisedly, for there can be no doubt, from observations extending over many years, that the result of their excessive indulgence in smoking has been seriously to impair their constitutions. The attempts that have been made to check the mischief have hitherto failed, as it has been found difficult, if not impossible, to induce them to do a stroke of work without the accompaniment of the "fragrant weed." 276

Cannibalism.—1. The early stories regarding the prevalence of cannibalism among these savages do not at the present day require refutation.[1] No lengthened investigation was needed to disprove the long credited fiction, for not a trace could be discovered of the existence of such a practice in their midst, even in far-off times. 266

2. It is curious, however, to note, that while they express the greatest horror of the custom, and indignantly deny that it ever held a place among their institutions, a very general belief has been entertained by the tribes living in South and Middle Andaman as to its prevalence in other races, and even among their own countrymen inhabiting North and Little Andaman; and to this cause is chiefly ascribed the dread which they and their fathers have, from a distant period, evinced of their neighbours, and the animosity displayed towards strangers who have approached or landed on their shores; but these sentiments are now confined to those individuals who have had but scant opportunity of becoming acquainted with ourselves and other aliens, or with the results of the visits paid by us to the dreaded *yērewa-* and *jārawa-* territories.

Communications, Chirography, and Drawing.—1. The density of the Andaman jungles, and the unsuitability of their canoes for long expeditions by sea, would of themselves be serious hindrances to free intercourse between the various tribes, even were there not the further difficulty—due in great measure to the above circumstances—of difference of language to contend with. 619

2. There are no marked boundaries between the various tribal districts, but a general understanding exists between neighbouring tribes regarding the limits of their respective domains, which are usually defined by such natural barriers as a range of hills, a creek, or even a belt of dense jungle. So careful are they to respect these boundaries, that, before even travelling through, and particularly before hunting or fishing in, the territory of a 619 486

[1] Papuans being regarded as such inveterate anthropophagi, ethnologists will probably agree in considering that the non-existence—nay, even horror—of this custom among the Andamanese furnishes an important item in the array of facts which militate against the theory held by some that the latter form a branch of the great Papuan family.

In a recent paper Dr. N. DATTA-MAJUMDER, Director, Department of Anthropology, Government of India, writes:

"From a study of 34 Onge families contacted by us, it is found that the average size of the family is only 3.15. Thirteen families out of 34 are childless. That is, 38.2% of the married couples are sterile".

When, in 1946, proposals were made for undertaking work for the amelioration of the conditions of the inhabitants of the Andaman Islands along the same line as had been done among the Bhil and other tribes of Central India, Dr. B. S. GUHA, at that time Director of the Department of Anthropology, very reasonably observed that "the problem of the aborigines of the Andaman Islands is not the same as that of the other primitive tribes of India", and that "the need among them is not so much the spread of education and social uplift as the arrest in the decline in population which has been most alarming".

The Ongi have been in sporadic contact with the outside world for many years. They have been visiting Port Blair, particularly since some of them moved to Rutland Island on the southern tip of Great Andaman. This contact with civilization was bound to affect their material culture, as well as their whole mentality. We may again quote Dr. DATTA-MAJUMDER who says:

"As a result of this long contact the Onge have already come to appreciate a number of foreign articles, for example, tobacco leaves, tea leaves, sugar, matches, aluminium utensils and implements made of iron (especially bill-hooks and files). In order to secure these articles, they often barter away their valuable honey and shells. The afore-mentioned changes in material culture have at present touched only the fringe of Onge culture. But the demand for these articles (especially tobacco leaves and safety matches) is becoming so great that Onge culture is likely to be vitally affected in the near future".

Dr. DATTA-MAJUMDER came to the conclusion that "the hunting and food-gathering Onge culture, which had been an autonomous cultural system in the past, is now breaking down".

The Ongi were repeatedly visited by government officers, but the resulting information is paltry. PORTMAN spent several months among the coastal groups of Little Andaman in 1886 and 1887 and collected a few hundred words of their language. In 1901, C. BODEN KLOSS visited a group of Ongi on Rutland Island and one on Little Andaman, both only for a few hours. At some time between 1906 and 1908, A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN went to Little Andaman for several weeks and made a preliminary study of the Ongi language. In 1928, EGON VON EICKSTEDT spent a few weeks among the Ongi on Rutland Island and visited briefly several groups on the coast of Little Andaman for the sake of physical anthropological research.

To truly primitive peoples like the Onges, European medical practices are fascinating. Men and women will refuse literally nothing once they are convinced of our intention to do them good and cure their ills. Although they have a rudimentary form of medicine, they recognize the superiority of European methods, and medical aid has therefore become our most powerful means of making contact with uncivilized peoples.

While I was busy trying to alleviate their ailments I became aware of the power which 'medicine' has over them, and I was also able to observe their own methods of dealing with their ills. Understandably, disease, death and birth are all attributed to particular supernatural beings, or to the spirits of the dead. They try not to offend these beings, but strive nevertheless, in their own way, at least to cure disease. Once primitive peoples see our methods they respect them, and are eager to be treated; strange though it all seems, they develop a blind faith in the omnipotence of the new ways.

There is little actual disease among the Onges and they have equally few vices. They are still unaware of the existence of alcohol, and have not learned how to ferment sugar substances, such as the honey in which the Little Andaman abounds. Tobacco is a recent introduction, and the Onges at once became wildly addicted to it; the tobacco leaves I had taken with me were in fact my best means of making my way peacefully into the island. A few Onges have acquired a supply of opium from Burmese and Chinese smugglers along the north coast, but instead of smoking it they seem to limit themselves to chewing it mixed with tobacco, and have fortunately no means of replenishing their stock.

Polio, tuberculosis, smallpox and cancer seem unknown, but for some unknown reason the islands have on a number of occasions been struck by disastrous epidemics of measles. These epidemics struck nearly every member of some of the communal huts, judging from survivors' reports, and the sites were afterwards abandoned, leaving the huts to be destroyed by termites.

The census of 1931 includes a personal observation by Portman of congenital syphilis in several Onges. This has since been proved wrong and in 1952 I found only one young man with nasal malformation possibly attributable to the disease, half-moon incisors, and abnormality of the skull and palate. I was not able to find him

Cleaning themselves, to the Onges, means painting themselves to ward off evil and to remove, so they said, the smell of pig fat after the colossal orgies which follow a particularly good hunt, when even they find the stench too much. These orgies, which give them appalling indigestion for days, are followed by an apparently instinctive variation of their diet to raw or cooked vegetable foods. On three occasions from 1952–54 I was present at one of these solemn pork and honey orgies. The Onges ate almost till they burst, and then, hardly able to move, cleaned up by a grand painting session. The women do the painting, families vying with each other to produce weird new designs, which are then copied until the next feast.[1]

Fed and painted, the Onges sit down to smoke, using pipes made from crabs' claws. Still regardless of hygiene the pipes go from one mouth to another, the women smoking just as heavily as the men.

One curious anomaly is that the Onges do sometimes sweep the earth floor of the communal hut. The floor is not deliberately beaten down, but becomes hardened by continuous walking on it; in dry weather it turns to dust, which rises and settles everywhere, especially under the roof, where the lumps of cooked meat, fish and so on are hung. For the cleaning a broom or besom is prepared, well made with very hard, supple, palm fibres, bound tightly and carefully with cords made from reeds. The whole thing is about eighty centimetres long and as thick as a man's wrist.

The dirt is simply swept out all round from under the roof of the hut through the gap between the roof and the ground. In the course of time a ring of refuse builds up round the hut, forming a glorious breeding ground for insects of all kinds. When the hut has to be rebuilt, owing to the ravages of wood-worm and termites, the ring is levelled off to form the new floor. Since the same small, well-chosen site may be used for thousands of years, the hut ends up perching on top of a small mound of refuse dating back to very

[1] From one year to the next I saw no real evolution of art forms but cyclic changes of designs, with a preference for certain geometric patterns, at certain times of the year. Having watched various individuals of both sexes closely over a period of some years I can say that in the Onges at least, contrary to what is generally understood, the use of given patterns, and given kinds of ochre, does not correspond with given types of food. Any feast is always followed by painting, always with the weirdest designs possible, but always geometrical, never far from the current 'fashion', and never even remotely inspired by the basis of the feast.

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remains belonged to species still extant. Some chronological assistance was given, however, by four different stratifications due to evident changes in the level of the adjacent marshes, resulting not from any general marine phenomena, but from numerous land movements. On these occasions the cliffs sank, the sea flowed inland and corals flourished, later to be buried by the black ooze and mud of the mangrove swamps.

The maximum rise in the sea-level during the growth of the midden was a little over three metres, and affected a wide area. The date could be established by a full geological study of the archipelago as a whole, but it is clear that although this and similar occurrences had direct stratigraphic effects on the middens, the results were manifest only over very long periods of time.

Refuse from introductions of European origin, such as pipes, glass bottles, shot pellets, pieces of iron, etc., appear in the top level, only fifteen centimetres thick and dating back about a hundred years. There were no dog bones either here or anywhere else on Little or Great Andaman. Recently introduced, the dog clearly caused an increase in the amount of pig remains, and a parallel reduction in shell refuse. Below the fifteen centimetres level, iron, imported pipes and glass fragments disappear, and the crab-claw pipes, still used today by the Onges, begin to emerge. The smoking habit must, as I have said, date from very ancient times, as traces of these claw pipes appear in the lowest strata, in contact with virgin soil.[1]

The actual consistency of the layers, which vary considerably, can tell us much. At Golpahar, we reached a depth of about four metres from the top of the midden through refuse mixed with only a little loose earth, very easy to penetrate. Bones, shells and other objects emerged clean, as if only recently rejected. The situation altered suddenly about one metre from the bottom, when the strata became hard and cemented with a mixture of ashes and earth. In these layers the shells were calcified by exposure to fire, and so fragile that they could only be recovered in broken pieces.

[1] It is obvious that smoking is a very ancient vice; leaves of the wild hemp are still smoked in Africa as they were long before the discovery of tobacco and claw pipes like those of the Onges are found in Eastern New Guinea, especially on the south coast, and as far as the Torres Straits and the Melville Straits. In Australia these pipes appear only in a few coastal areas in the east and north, including the Gulf of Carpentaria, and they are not found in the rest of Australia or in Polynesia.

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less plentiful and containing a great deal of wax, and is greatly prized by the Onges. The darker bees, common in China, Celebes, Borneo and beyond, build their nests in cavities in the rocks, or in tree-trunks. Their honey, darker and with less wax, is more plentiful, but not so fine; when there is enough of the golden honey the Onges ignore the darker variety.

Few of the fruits on Little Andaman contain much sugar, but the Onges eat more than enough honey to compensate any deficiency that would otherwise occur. Whatever the fruit in season, men, women and children climb happily about like acrobats, hanging in the trees to get at it and the honey that goes with it. To chop the tree down is, of course, easiest and the obvious first choice for any Onge. Failing this, and their hooked poles, they climb up the nearby lianas into the branches, or walk up the trunk – an easy feat for them with their very long arms and almost prehensile toes.

Although there are arak nuts and betel leaves in the forest, the Onges ignore them. They are the same variety as elsewhere; *Areca catechu* and *Piper betel*. The Nicobarese are so addicted to them that many have lips and teeth hideously deformed as a result, but this is quite unknown among the Onges, contrary to earlier reports. The appearance of addiction in the Nicobars may have occurred after the separation of the peoples.

With all these fruits the Onges consume vast quantities of honey from the two species of bee, *dorsata* and *nigrocinta*. During the rainy season they can only get at the darker, poorer honey of *nigrocinta*, which builds nests under boulders or in crevices of trees or rocks. The Onges' real honey orgies occur, therefore, in the dry season, when the honey birds (Indicationidae), common in Africa and all over Asia, lead them to the trees where the golden honey of *dorsata* is hidden.

When one of the Onges finds a nest of bees he puts a mark on the rock or tree as a sign of ownership. None of the others would then dare to take possession of it, for fear of punishment by the group,[1] but when the time comes to take the honey everyone helps in the hard work of getting at the nest and opening it up. On one trip from Labanar to Togalanghe, on 19 March 1954, the Onges pointed out over twenty *Nigrocinta* nests to me, all reserved ready for use

[1] However deep in the forest a crime is committed, it will inevitably be discovered in the end, and punished by banishment from the community.

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Andaman, in Yeratil Jig (near Port Anson, about fifteen miles from Long Island) in Diglipur (or Dilyapur) Creek, near Port Cornwallis, and in Wilima Jig,[1] but they are now extinct. In March 1952 the Onges had described the presence of crocodiles so clearly to me as to leave no doubt what they meant, and I soon received confirmation when I found their tracks on the sand about one kilometre from the mouth of Jackson Creek, on the right bank, and then saw some lying on the shore across the creek. Through my field glasses I saw small birds pecking between the teeth of the great wide-open jaws. As we approached they slid lazily into the sea, some reappearing a little later, their cavernous mouths rising vertically out of the water. Every day after that I saw them swimming quietly near the banks, and one afternoon my men and I between us saw over a dozen, near Nachuge, dozing in the mud or in the water.

The Onges assured me that crocodiles will come out of the water to a certain whistle. I got them to try it; the Onges whistled, and whistled again, but no crocodiles came!

Very different from the great turtles and the crocodiles, but equally important in the daily life of the Onges, are the crabs from which the islanders make their ancient and very characteristic pipes. They eat the crabs and use the claws to make the pipes, cutting them across the joint and boring a hole in the end, as they have done since time immemorial, to smoke aromatic leaves from the forest. Fragments of similar pipes, charred with use, appear in even the lowest strata of the kitchen-middens, dating back thousands of years and proving the antiquity of the smoking habit. Contrary to popular belief, smoking did not begin everywhere with the introduction of tobacco – in Asia at least men smoked thousands of years ago.

The claw pipes of the Onges have a groove cut round the end which goes into the mouth, so that the teeth can grip it better. I have seen identical pipes, with the same groove, in the Melville Islands, where there are many other signs of ethnographic connections with the Andamans. The canoes, for example, are identical with those of the Andamans; the peoples themselves, however, are today very different physically.

[1] According to Portman a man was dragged into the water here on 11 May 1894 by a crocodile and killed; several similar incidents have occurred since.

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way in which the spirits are invoked against enemies, involving the use of some personal possession – an example is the invariable destruction of the used *naquineghe*, or of hair after shaving. The same fear of the night induced by the idea of spirits walking abroad led to the making of torches from rolled palm leaves containing a mixture of embers and resin.

From the Andamans to Oceania the chief spirit is generally imagined in the form of a giant lizard, living at the top of the sky and ruling the storms; none of the peoples who believe in him ever eat any lizard or lizard-like creature. All of them have the same sexually suggestive dances, both male and female, sometimes inspired by the monitor or dragon-lizard, symbol of desire, and often associated with miming and dramatic representations of real and imaginary scenes. These dances, with their *joie de vivre*, are accompanied by the smoking of aromatic leaves in pipes which are frequently made from natural objects such as the claws of crustacea. The Onges in fact have since very ancient times used only this type as shown in the lower levels of the kitchen-middens dating back at least five thousand years. Everywhere, pipes of this kind are used indiscriminately by both sexes, passing from mouth to mouth. Pipes identical in every way with those of the Onges are found to the east of the archipelago, well into Oceania, and I have myself also seen them on Melville Island, north of Australia, always with the same notches for the teeth to grip. This undeniable evidence of the spread of identical pipes over so wide an area long before the possibility of European contacts cannot in my opinion be attributed other than to migration over vast distances in very ancient times.

Similar coincidences apply in the case of the arrow harpoon and indeed harpoons in general. I cannot agree with Brown in his assertion that the harpoon dates from the arrival of European influences, which brought the use of iron; the harpoon points made by long and patient working of *Tridacna* shells which I found in the kitchen-middens of the Andamans are in my view enough to refute the theory.

The canoes from which these harpoons are used, with the absence of distinction between bow and stern and the single float on the lee side, are extremely typical. They are identical in peoples which have been widely separated for a very long time and appear not only on the Andamans, and as far as Oceania, but also in North